

★ ★ ★ BIG SKY FLYER



Vol. XXVIII, No. 2 - Jan. 2008

OFF WE GO...

The MTANG continues its
HIGH OPS TEMPO

{ INSIDE }



Command Chief Seibel
offers some information
on PTSD.



'Tis the season!
The MTANG ships the
Great Falls city
Christmas tree.

EXCELLENCE ★ INTEGRITY ★ SERVICE



By Command Chief
Master Sgt. Larry Seibel

Be on high alert for post traumatic stress disorder

Always remember to watch out for your wingman

.....

As I take time to reflect on the last 12 months, I can't help but think how busy the 120th Fighter Wing has been. In the last year, many 120th Fighter Wing members have deployed around the world in support of the Global War on Terrorism. Members remaining at home station helped with our detachment closure, which occurred at March Air Reserve Base, Calif., on Oct. 1 2007.

On Dec. 1, 2007, 150 unit members deployed to Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Tucson, Ariz., in support of Operation SNOWBIRD, a deployment that will prepare our pilots and maintenance personnel for the upcoming deployment to Iraq. In two short months, our unit will deploy approximately 200 members to Iraq in support of OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM. I am uncertain what lies in store for the 120th Fighter Wing in 2008, but I am certain the tempo will not decrease.

With the extremely high operations tempo the Air National Guard is experiencing, unit members may face severe stress due to separation from loved ones and stress from being in a war zone.

In the ongoing war against terrorism, the Army and Air National Guard are being tasked with more full time missions and will be expected to execute these missions flawlessly with a part-time force. In light of our past and current operations tempo and our pending deployment to Iraq, I would like to offer information on post traumatic stress disorder.

What is PTSD? Clinicians define it as a type of anxiety disorder that's triggered by an extremely traumatic event. A person can develop PTSD when they experience or witness a traumatic event. PTSD can occur following a life-threatening event like military combat, natural disasters or terrorist incidents. Symptoms may include flashbacks, feelings of numbness, irritability, anger, or hopelessness. Those affected may have trouble concentrating, remembering, be easily startled or frightened. As symptoms continue people may drink excessively, engage in self-destructive behavior or withdraw from activities they used to enjoy.

PTSD is very serious and cannot be overlooked. With the extremely high operations tempo the Air National Guard is experiencing, unit members may face severe stress due to separation from loved ones and stress from being in a war zone. We must remember to look out for our wingman. We have always been great about looking out for each other, but I would ask everyone from folks deploying, supervisors, first sergeants, commanders to family members; if you see someone experiencing the symptoms listed above please channel this information immediately up your chain of command. It is imperative the person involved receives medical help immediately. The last 12 months has been great for the 120th Fighter Wing and 2008 will be even better. I can't begin to tell you how proud I am of each of you. You are members of the 120th Fighter Wing, a unit that is outstanding, filled with pride and dedicated to duty and country. The 120th Fighter Wing is looked at as a world-class organization by U.S. Air Force and National Guard leaders because of who you are and what you have done for this unit.



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Technical Sgt. Clinton Perry, a vehicle operator with the 120th Fighter Wing of the Montana Air National Guard, drives the tractor-trailer hauling the city Christmas tree down 2nd Avenue North to its destination in front of the Civic Center. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Master Sgt. Eric J. Peterson)

Command Chief's Column . . . 1

pg. 3 Modern Day M*A*S*H*

The operation resembled a modern day version of a scene from the M*A*S*H* television series.

Rattler Challenge pg. 5

Competitors from the Montana Air National Guard took part in the second annual Rattler Challenge at the 120th Fighter Wing.

pg. 7 No slowing down

From Snowbird to the next AEF rotation, to the transition from the F-16 to the F-15, we just don't stop.

pg. II RED HORSE paves the way

The 219th RED HORSE Squadron of the Montana Air National Guard demonstrated this recently by putting their horsepower to work on a local community service project.

Sixty Years of History. . . 13



The news you can use . . 14

Faces of the Guard . . 15

Modern day M*A*S*H*

Medical personnel “Gets ‘R Done” at Fort Harrison

Fort Harrison, Mont. – The operation resembled a modern day version of a scene from the M*A*S*H* television series, but the helicopters and equipment were authentic, not Hollywood props.

The Montana Air National Guard medical personnel received realistic training in hot-loading patients into aero-medical Blackhawk helicopters, courtesy of the pilots and crew chiefs assigned to the 1st of the 189th Aviation Battalion of the Montana Army National Guard. Fort Harrison, Montana hosted the field training exercise that provided the expeditionary medical support training for members of the 120th Fighter Wing Medical Group.

Forty-four medical personnel deployed to the Montana Army National Guard installation in September to take part in this unique training opportunity, but months of planning went into scheduling the medical training that was appropriately named “Operation Get ‘R Done.”

Fort Harrison provided an ideal austere environment and the qualified instructors needed to reinforce the medical training, according to 2nd Lt. Christine Bringard.

“This was my first planning exercise as a medical readiness officer,” said Lieutenant Bringard. “I had to get to know everyone and learn who to contact. It took six months of planning and coordinating with key personnel to get it all set up.”

This was the first time that an exercise of this scale was planned by the medical group that included participants from the Montana Army National Guard, the active duty Air Force and various civilian agencies. Many of the medical group’s annual medical readiness objectives were accomplished during the exercise, including expeditionary medical support; medical, chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and high-yield explosives training; deployment processing; and responding to scenarios involving natural disasters.

“Getting certified in our EMEDS (expeditionary medical support) training was our biggest challenge,” said Lieutenant Bringard. “We will have to complete additional formal training with the Air Force, but overall we had remarkable responses from everyone that participated. This was a great experience.”



Medical group personnel appreciated the exceptional effort demonstrated by their Army Guard counterparts. “We had outstanding cooperation from the Montana Army National Guard personnel,” said Aerospace Medical Services Craftsman Tech. Sgt. Jerry Perman. “We completed a level of training that’s difficult to achieve due to equipment cost. We worked in an atypical environment that most of us were not familiar with which added to the value of the training.”

Helicopters weren’t the only Army equipment that the 120th Medical Group personnel were exposed to during the five-day-field-training exercise Fort Harrison.

The Army National Guard instructors provided specialized training in M1 Abrams tank safety and emergency-crew extraction to the deployed members of the Medical Group.

By: Senior Master Sgt. Eric J. Peterson
120th Fighter Wing Multimedia Manager

Members of the 120th Medical Group of the Montana Air National Guard receive training on hot-loading patients into a Montana Army National Guard Blackhawk helicopter at Ft. Harrison, Mont. in September.



“We completed a level of training that’s difficult to achieve due to equipment cost. We worked in an atypical environment that most of us were not familiar with, which added to the value of the training.”
- Tech. Sgt. Jerry Perman



(Left to right) Senior Airman Andrew Castle, Staff Sgt. Heather Schriver and 2nd Lt. Joseph Joslyn load patient Staff Sgt. Kelly Packard into a Montana Army National Guard Blackhawk helicopter during a field training exercise at Ft. Harrison, Mont. in September.



120th Medical Group Tech. Sgt. Jerry Perman (facing the camera) guides the litter holding the patient into the Blackhawk helicopter.



Montana Air National Guard
Lt. Col. Troy Frost and Staff
Sgt. Trevor Casebolt cooperate
on the written portion of the
Rattler Challenge. (U.S. Air
Force photo by Master Sgt.
Rose Bennett)



The participants of the 2007 Rattler
Challenge participate in the two-mile
ruck march. (U.S. Air Force photo
by Master Sgt. Rose Bennett)



Bring on the Rattler Challenge

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120 Security Forces host Rattler Challenge

Competitors from the Montana Air National Guard took part in the second annual Rattler Challenge at the 120th Fighter Wing during the October unit training assembly.

The Rattler Challenge is an opportunity for the men and women of the Montana Air National Guard to showcase their intellect, physical strength, mental endurance, and sharp-shooting skills in a competitive setting. The annual event is hosted by the 120th Fighter Wing Security Forces Squadron.

Four commanders including, Col. Mark Allen, National Guard Bureau director of security forces, Col. Michael McDonald, 120th Fighter Wing commander, Lt. Col.s Troy Frost, 120th Fighter Wing mission support group commander, and Jim Oehmcke, 120th Fighter Wing mission support group deputy commander and 32 members of the security forces squadron were paired in two-person teams for this year's event.

The competition consisted of four events beginning with a 25 question assessment covering everything from security forces job knowledge to Montana Air National Guard history.

The participants were then tested on how many push-ups and sit-ups they could complete in one minute.

The next event challenged each team to complete a two-mile ruck march with each person carrying two weapons and a 30 pound ruck sack containing gas masks, level four protective vests, helmets, canteens, and all load bearing equipment.

The final event, a small-arms-firing competition, proved to be more difficult than advertised, requiring competitors to fire their M9 and M4 right and left handed.

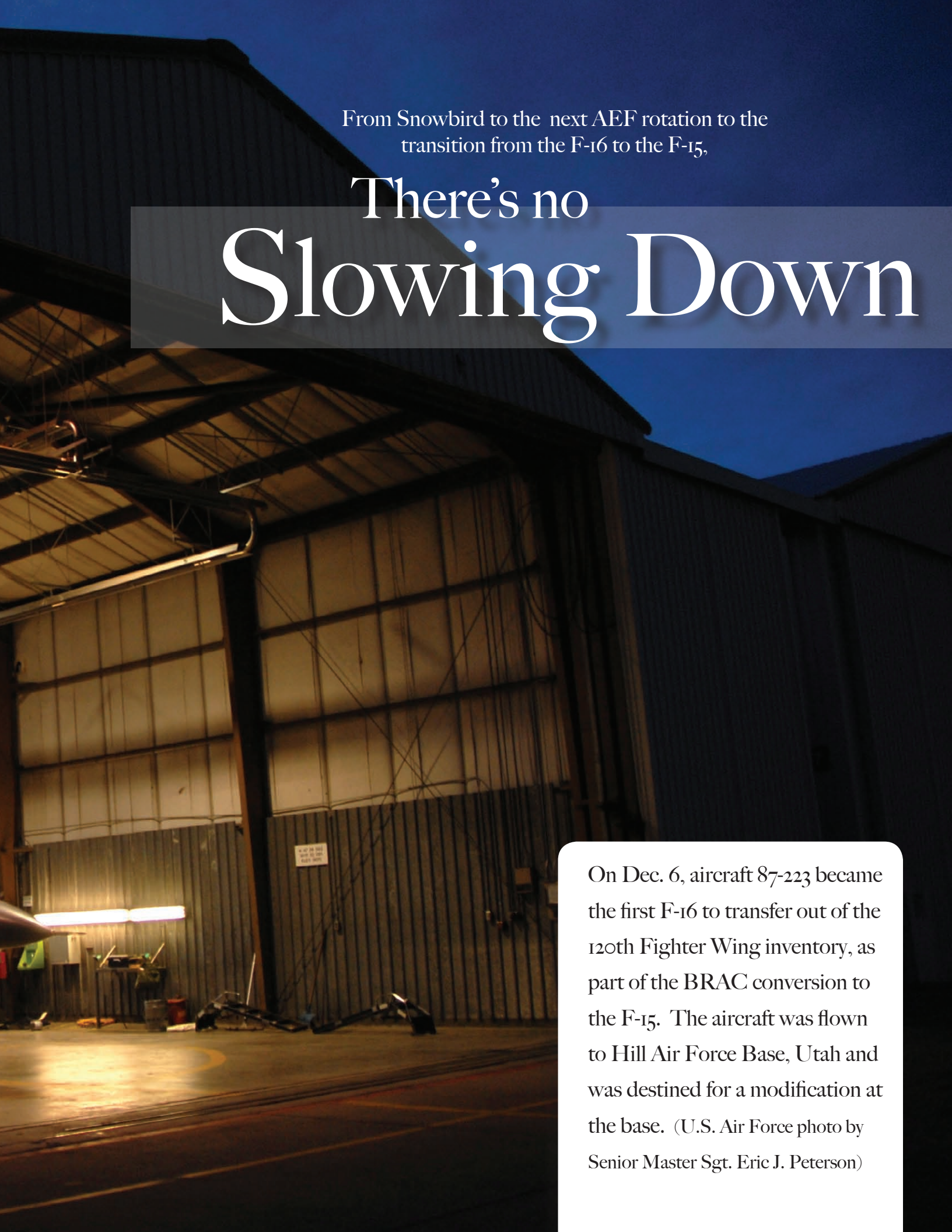
There were many impressive performances this year with the commanders establishing benchmarks for excellence. Col. McDonald and Tech. Sgt. Rusty Freeny won the assessment component with a score of 38 out of 50. Lt. Col. Frost set a record for the most push-ups in one minute with an impressive 108 repetitions. Lt. Col. Frost and his wingman, Staff Sgt. Trevor Casebolt also set a new record for the 2 mile ruck march with a time of 21:47.

Although new records were set, returning champions Senior Master Sgt. John O'Brien and Staff Sgt. Josh Brown retained their title with a narrow six-point victory.

Plans are already being made for the 2008 Rattler Challenge, and the best and brightest from any squadron in the Montana Air National Guard are encouraged to compete.

By: 120th Fighter Wing PA Staff





From Snowbird to the next AEF rotation to the
transition from the F-16 to the F-15,

There's no Slowing Down

On Dec. 6, aircraft 87-223 became the first F-16 to transfer out of the 120th Fighter Wing inventory, as part of the BRAC conversion to the F-15. The aircraft was flown to Hill Air Force Base, Utah and was destined for a modification at the base. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Master Sgt. Eric J. Peterson)

Training in Tucson

MTANG trains at Operation SNOWBIRD

Several fighters and more than 150 members from the 120th Fighter Wing, Montana Air National Guard were deployed to Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Tucson, Ariz., for the annual Operation SNOWBIRD Dec. 1 – 15.

The goal is to prepare the pilots for the conditions they will face when they are deployed.

Maj. Jason Green, 120th Fighter Wing project officer said the training is an invaluable opportunity.

“We have limited opportunities to practice integrating close air support activities. Ensuring we can maintain effective command and control and situational awareness in this high-tempo environment will prepare us for any possible deployment,” said Major Green.

The 120th Fighter Wing fighter pilots will train on providing urban close air support, while integrating with ground support forces. Training will include air-to-ground combat and delivery of inert and live munitions while evading simulated surface-to-air missile launches.

The ground crews will receive valuable training by keeping the eight 120th Fighter Wing F-16s mission ready, while executing live load operations. The 116th Air Support Operations Squadron, Washington Air National Guard, will provide close air support ground controls.

The annual training program brings fighter units from cold-weather regions to southern Arizona during winter months. Known as Operation Snowbird, the program allows visiting aircraft, including National Guard and Air Force Reserve units and international allies, to use the Davis-Monthan flight line and bombing ranges to train for two weeks at a time. The Arizona National Guard's 162nd Fighter Wing, based at the Tucson International Airport, coordinates the program.

By: Lt. Col. Mary Swan
120th Fighter Wing Public Affairs



Staff Sgt. Sean Miller completes a weapons inspection on an AIM-9 captive prior to a aircraft launch during the Snowbird deployment. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt Micah R. Hewett, 120 MW/MXMCE)

TARS provides critical information

186th Fighter Squadron receives Theater Airborne Reconnaissance Training

Eighteen pilots from the 120th Fighter Wing Montana Air National Guard recently completed academic training and sortie requirements on the Theater Airborne Reconnaissance System, a certification now required for all F-16C pilots deploying to a Central Command theater of war.

The TARS training suite, consisting of three pods, was on site at the 120th Fighter Wing for one week before being shipped to the next F-16 unit scheduled for training.

TARS collects intelligence information from the battlefield's second echelon and beyond, in adverse weather and all light conditions. Each TARS pod, measuring 13' in length and weighing approximately 1200 pounds, is positioned on the centerline of the F-16C. Manufactured by British Aerospace Engineering Systems, the TARS is capable of capturing two types of images: forward framing sensor and medium altitude electro optical sensor, both of which can be linked via real time to imagery analysts who assist pilots and commanders with rapidly determining battle damage assessment and time critical targeting support. Captured data can be quickly disseminated to commanders and Intelligence specialists as it is recorded and transmitted in common formats.

The fact that the F-16C can carry a full complement of weapons, conduct a full range of missions, including flying up to sevens Gs while carrying a TARS pod, makes the F-16C a state-of-the-art-air-defense asset. The pod, designed for altitudes ranging from 15,000 and 30,000 feet, has been described as the only Air Force High Speed Penetrating Reconnaissance Asset.

By: Lt. Col. Mary Swan
120th Fighter Wing Public Affairs



TOP: An F-16C assigned to the 120th Fighter Wing of the Montana Air National Guard lifts off of the Great Falls International Airport runway carrying a centerline TARS pod.

MID: The lens cover closes upon the forward framing sensor of the TARS pod attached to a Montana Air National Guard F-16C.

BOTTOM: A photograph of a computer screen demonstrating the high resolution images that can be acquired through the use of the TARS system.



RED HORSE

paves the way

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**219th RHS provides community service
assisting local VFW post**

Great Falls, Montana – Community service has always been an important aspect of serving in the Air National Guard. The 219th RED HORSE Squadron of the Montana Air National Guard demonstrated this recently by putting their horsepower to work on a local community service project.

The unimproved parking lot of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 5590 located on the Westside of Great Falls, Mont., was found full of ruts and potholes this fall. With winter just around the corner, any water that may have frozen in the potholes would have posed a serious safety problem for the members walking through the parking lot.

After hearing about the plight of the local veterans group, the military construction specialists volunteered to help their fellow veterans in need.

“If we could do more projects like that I’d be more than happy to do them. I’m sure a lot of the other airmen would too, we

had a good time and it’s a kind of self-satisfaction when we finish them,” said Tech. Sgt. Fred Haffner, a member of the team that worked on the community service project.



The Guard unit provided the use of heavy equipment and five operators for a day to change what was once a rough, uneven

and rutted area into a smooth, level parking surface.

According to Staff Sgt. Eric Huber, the community service project also provided the military members valuable real-world training in ripping, grading and compacting the ground.

“Everybody enjoyed it, everybody liked it and thought it was real good training for what we do in the real world and on our missions,” said Sergeant Huber. “We are community based, and it helps to go back and give back to the community. It shows that we are here for the state of Montana. We are the Montana Air National Guard.”

Did you know?

The USS New York

It was built with 24 tons of scrap steel from the World Trade Center. It is the fifth in a new class of warship - designed for missions that include special operations against terrorists. It will carry a crew of 360 sailors and 700 combat-ready Marines to be delivered ashore by helicopters and assault craft.

Steel from the World Trade Center was melted down in a foundry in Amite, La. to cast the ship's bow section. When it was poured into the molds on Sept. 9, 2003, 'those big rough steelworkers treated it with total reverence,' recalled Navy Capt. Kevin Wensing, who was there. 'It was a spiritual moment for everybody there.'

Junior Chavers, foundry operations manager, said that when the trade center steel first arrived, he touched it with his hand and the 'hair on my neck stood up.' 'It had a big meaning to it for all of us,' he said. 'They knocked us down. They can't keep us down. We're going to be back.'

The ship's motto? **'Never Forget'**



OPPOSITE: 219th RED HORSE member Staff Sgt. Terry Hendricks operates a roller during the compacting phase of the parking lot leveling project.

TOP: World War II veteran and VFW member Avery Pace observes as a roller operated by a member of the 219th RED HORSE Squadron compacts the post parking lot.



The Guardsmen were proud to be able to provide their construction skills to the veterans who had served in World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Operation Desert Storm, and the present War on Terror.

"I really like that, especially with the vets, they did help us out, so it's kind of like returning the favor and helping the older folks. To be honest with you, it does give you kind of a warm feeling," said Sergeant Haffner.

Thanks to the effort of the 219th RED HORSE Squadron, the members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 5590 will now have a much safer parking lot to use this winter while visiting their post.

By: Senior Master Sgt. Eric J. Peterson
120th Fighter Wing Multimedia Manager

HISTORY *Of* THE MTANG

The Montana Air National Guard turned 60 on June 27, 2007. There are so many stories to tell, it is difficult to abbreviate our history without minimizing our many achievements. Instead of a detailed list of events, here is the second in a series of the top historical eras that span the years.

THE SUBSONIC ERA: 1952-1966

The 186th Fighter Squadron received its first jet trainer aircraft in 1952, a T-33 Shooting Star. The first jet fighter, an F-86 Sabre, landed a year later. The F-94 Starfire served only three months before it was replaced by F-89 Scorpions, which served until 1966.

By Master Sgt. Al Garver
Joint Force Historian



The News you can use

Recruiter Notes: changes and challenges ahead

2008 is going to mark one of the unit's greatest changes and challenges in years. The 120th Fighter Wing is converting to F-15s and the 219th Red Horse Squadron is also going to bring on additional positions to enhance their war fighting posture. Change is truly a constant in our ever-changing world. Along with unit changes, recruiting also has potential changes. Recruiting has the potential of a new recruiting and retention superintendent and an in-service recruiter at Malmstrom Air Force Base also serving the 219th with their recruiting needs. Changes of this magnitude can tend to be difficult on recruiting and I'm asking for your help. Last year was amazing due to your involvement along with senior leadership emphasis. With your continued help, I'm confident that this year will also be successful. Don't forget to utilize the GRAP program and refer your family and friends. Please contact one of our recruiters: Master Sgt. Deshner, Tech. Sgt. Fairhurst, Tech. Sgt. Gunter, Tech. Sgt. Pollock, or Staff Sgt. Brown at 1 (800) 874-7763 or www.mtgrea.ang.af.mil. Thank you again for all your past and future support.

Master Sgt. Duane B. Deshner

State scholarships information

\$500 per semester is available for members, including technicians, if they meet the following requirements.

- E-1 through E-7 and O-1 through O-2
- Eligible for Montgomery GI Bill or under a 6 year enlistment
- Must not exceed 16 years of military service
- Enrolled at a Mont. institution of higher learning in an under graduate program or a VA approved Mont. training program

For more information, please contact the Retention Office at 791-0401.

Promotions

Airman 1st Class to Senior Airman

CLARK, TRACIE R.	SVS
DERRICK W. HAXTON	AMXS
DANIEL J. HELMERS	MXS

Senior Airman to Staff Sgt

SEAN P. ALLEN	MXS
STEVEN J. KOENES	AMXS

Staff Sgt to Tech Sgt

ROBERT B. MARTIN	SFS
JONNA W. BEATTIE	LRS
JOSEPH N. BOLlich	MXG
DAVID L. CROWDER	SFS
JESSE A. ENRIQUEZ	SVS
PAUL B. HENLEY	CF
BRIAN J. KUNKEL	LRS
KIMBERLY I. LORD	LRS
GERALD D. MACKAY	MXS
JOHN S. MCCALLUM	AMXS
EDWARD J. MCLEAN	SFS
RAEGEN A. ROBERTSON	186 FS
EZRA D. SCHEI	CES
REBECCA A. SKINNER	MSF
RYAN D. WHITHORN	LRS

Tech Sgt to Master Sgt

WILLIAM R. FREENEY	SFS
BRIAN V. HAENTGES	SFS
EARL J. HILZENDEGER	MDG
MONTE A. HOWSE	MXS
DIRK M. JOHNSON	CF
DANIEL P. MCALLISTER	MXS
EDWARD T. MCNAMEE	SFS
JOHN O. MOYER	MDG
JAMES D. PATZER	MSF
KURT D. TROWBRIDGE	SFS
DUANE C. WILSON	MXS

Master Sgt to Senior Master Sgt

JOEL R. CLUM	MXS
GREGORY A. GROSENICK	MXS

Faces of the Guard

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GREAT FALLS, MT



Student flight starts new Airmen out right

Among the thousands of recruits sent through U.S. Air Force basic training at Lackland Air Force Base each year, there are a few who stand out from day one. They are the recruits coming from the Montana Air National Guard's Student Flight. The student flight, assigned to the Mission Support Flight, was designed for new Airmen who enlist into the unit and are waiting to go to Basic Military Training or technical school.

"The objective of the student flight is to prepare our new MTANG recruits for a successful BMT experience. We provide instruction on customs and courtesies, Air Force history, core values, leadership philosophies, and physical training," said 2nd Lt. Mike Loy, the officer in charge of the student flight. "The training provided creates a basis for a successful career within the MTANG and the U.S. Air Force."

"The program has evolved quite a bit in the last two years. We basically started with a room and a roll call and it was up to Lt Loy and me to put a program together," said Tech. Sgt. Jennifer Coleman, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the student flight.

The student flight is in session during unit training assemblies on Saturday from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. and on Sunday from 7 a.m. to 9 a.m.

With a lot of hard work and dedication from 2nd Lt. Loy and Tech. Sgt. Coleman, the student flight has become the foundation to a successful career with the MTANG.

Sergeant Coleman attributes a quote she heard in a briefing to the accomplishments of the student flight, "the only thing greater than reaching your potential is helping someone else reach theirs." "That's really what it's all about to me," she added.

By Staff Sgt. Christy Mason
Public Affairs office



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